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Сікорська Н.,

здобувач ступеня вищої освіти бакалавра
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внутрішніх справ

Консультант з мови: Хоменко О.

COLUMBIA'S DRUG TRADE: EVOLUTION AND IMPACT ON POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Drug trafficking is a series of processes of cultivation, production, trade in illegal drugs both within the country and within the world. The drug trade is part of organized crime, which includes other illegal transactions, such as illicit firearms, human trafficking and organ trafficking. The origins of drug trafficking began in the 19th century during the colonial period in China. About 4% of the world's population, about 300 million people, have used cocaine in their lifetime. Colombia has produced about 70% of the cocaine consumed in the last year [1].

One of the countries involved in drug trafficking is Colombia. Colombia is the fourth largest country in South America and the fifth largest economy in Latin America. He is well known for his coffee production and beautiful scenery, but he is highly regarded for his production and transshipment of cocaine. Although most South American countries play a role in drug trafficking, Colombia is the world's leading and largest producer of cocaine, accounting for about 70% of world production (World Drug Report 2020, 2020). The drug market in Colombia has been well developed due to accelerated changes in all aspects of its economic, political and social life. But the evolution of the drug trade in the country arose due to lack of regulation and progress of the state, exotic changes in the economy, interruption of socio-ethical values and beliefs, endless civil conflict and foreign policy pressure during the Cold War [2].

Consequences of drug trafficking in Colombia:

- Corruption and lobbying of officials have made the state corrupt.

- Crop management by using weapons on people in rural areas has violated human rights.
- Rural and urban migrants have been severely affected by drug-related violence. (GARCIA, 2014)
- Unconstitutional overthrow of power in rural areas and its replacement by rebel groups.
- It leads to other illicit trafficking, such as human trafficking, organ trafficking, arms exploitation and increased domestic violence.
- Drug trafficking in many developed and developing countries can undermine bilateral relations [3][4].

Growing coca: one kilogram of cocaine requires about 125 kilograms of coca, which would cost the local drug lab \$ 137.50. Once the lab turns coca leaves first into coca paste, then into a coca base and eventually into real cocaine, the cost will increase to \$ 2269.

By the time he takes to the streets, for example, in the United States, that pound of cocaine will provide \$ 60,000 in revenue. In Australia, it can be up to \$ 235,000 [5].

The fight against cocaine production is very difficult. Many farmers have no alternative, and the Colombian government has no way of resisting an industry that is protected by illegal armed groups with huge financial resources for corrupt government officials [6].

In addition, foreign states disagree on how to combat drug trafficking, which has led to various counter-narcotics efforts to abolish the work of another.

While the United Nations and Europe are pushing for crop replacement and rural development, the United States is pushing for repressive methods such as forced eradication and aerial chemical fumigation.

Eradication of coca

Colombia does not have a broad crop replacement program like Peru, which means that many farmers can easily transplant coca almost immediately after destroying their current crops.

Extremely violent resistance from drug traffickers complicates crop substitution promoted by the UN and the EU.

Colombia has a disorganized policy, governance and its economic growth has occurred mainly through drug trafficking. Although the government has taken steps to curb drug trafficking, such as the extradition treaty with the United States in 1981, the Colombian plan, and the peace treaty with the FARC guerrilla group in 2017, the drug trade is deeply rooted in Colombian soil. This process of drug management not only affects

the economy and political policy of the country, but also affects the social and psychological behavior of the people. Due to the growth of drug production and transportation, there are many adolescents and adults becoming addicted to drugs. The realistic notion that the state is a major player in decision-making has been undermined by the role of drug cartels and guerrilla groups in government. By bribing officials, controlling people over cocaine production, and influencing leaders, drug cartels and guerrilla groups are violent non-governmental actors that threaten the government. Sufficient measures must be taken to reduce drug trafficking in Colombia. Compulsory education, alternative employment policies for cocaine farmers, better awareness among people to distract them from cocaine production, loans and subsidies, special armed forces to control drug production, regional cooperation can pave the way for a better Colombia.

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